

# **CALIFORNIA MOTORCYCLE SAFETY SUMMIT**

**Irvine Marriott, Irvine, California**

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## **SUMMARY: A COMPENDIUM OF IDEAS TO INCREASE MOTORCYCLIST SAFETY IN CALIFORNIA**



**California Highway Patrol**

**Special Projects Section**

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# Compendium of Ideas: California Motorcycle Safety Summit

**Purpose:** The overall purpose of the first-ever California Motorcycle Safety Summit (CMSS) was to allow motorcycle safety stakeholders to have an active voice in the ongoing effort to reduce the number of motorcyclist collisions, injuries, and fatalities experienced in California. To illustrate the problem, statistics indicate the number of motorcyclists killed in collisions statewide has increased more than 132 percent in the past ten years. In terms of numbers, there were 433 motorcycle fatalities in 2006 compared to 235 motorcycle fatalities in 1996. Motorcycle fatality data for 2007 are provisional but indicate 461 motorcycle fatalities occurred in 2007, 128 more than occurred in 2006.

**Background:** In November 2007, the California Highway Patrol (CHP), California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), and Region 9 of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) met to discuss ways to reduce the significant increase of motorcyclist collisions, injuries, and fatalities in California. During this meeting, it was suggested California hold a hands-on, solution-based summit where the motorcycle community could actively participate in developing sound, practical solutions to enhance motorcyclist safety. As such, a planning committee was convened and comprised of CHP, OTS, NHTSA, Motorcycle Safety Foundation, California Motorcyclist Safety Program Advisory Committee, Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), Department of Transportation, Snell Memorial Foundation, and California State University, Sacramento.

After careful research was presented at subsequent planning meetings, four major areas impacting motorcyclist safety were identified as important discussion topics. It was determined all participants would be given the opportunity to provide their input on these topics at concurrent breakout sessions. The four topic areas were: *Untrained, Unlicensed, Unregistered; Speed, Right-of-Way, and Improper Turning; Promoting the Use of Safety Equipment; and Driving Under-the-Influence.*

**Attendance:** During planning, it was expected the summit would draw up to 250 participants. However, preliminary attendance data indicate there were over 270 individuals who attended this ground-breaking event. A list of these stakeholders is attached as an annex to this document.

**Results:** The following pages contain a summary of suggested action items appearing under general categories such as Education/Marketing/Outreach, Enforcement, and Regulatory and Statutory. The items which appear are the result of participant input recorded at the summit. Action items requiring legislative oversight are also included within each of the topic areas. As listed on Page 11 of this document, the Department will begin developing and implementing proposed action items within its jurisdiction. It is expected individual motorcycle stakeholders from outside of the Department will embrace these action items and effect change within their respective purview.

**Disclaimer:** The CHP does not endorse the recommendations contained in this document but is presenting them as they were presented at the summit.

## **A COMPENDIUM OF IDEAS TO INCREASE MOTORCYCLIST SAFETY IN CALIFORNIA**

### **GROUP A: UNTRAINED, UNLICENSED, UNREGISTERED**

#### **PROPOSED ACTION ITEMS**

##### **Education/Marketing/Outreach**

1. Online practice examinations for DMV.
2. Better rider training.
3. Offer a motorcycle safety course for high school students.
4. Launch a motorcycle safety public safety awareness campaign using safety messages aired on television, radio, and the Internet (with option of enforcement).
5. Include more motorcycle safety information into high school driver's training.
6. The motorcycle safety course should cover and give the DMV written test.
7. On state/local level, develop better partnerships with community groups, motorcycle clubs, and law enforcement to share information regarding each group's specific expertise.
8. Work with law-abiding motorcycle riders to help change public perception and awareness.

##### **Enforcement**

1. Task Force enforcement.
2. Departmental motorcycle safety checkpoints.

##### **Regulatory & Statutory**

1. Require proof of motorcyclist license/endorsement before court adjudication.

2. Regulation of specific motorcycle traffic schools for motorcycle violators by state agencies.
3. Release vehicle upon proof of motorcyclist license/endorsement.
4. Insurance agencies should be involved with licensing to relieve DMV congestion.

## Other

1. Insurance discounts for completion of initial and refresher training.
2. Make licensing and registration databases talk to each other – do research to encourage registered owners to get licensed.
3. Allow partial access to DMV database by training providers, insurance companies, and dealers.
4. Use penalties/fines to fund Basic Rider Course.
5. Undocumented immigrants obtaining licenses from other states.
6. Tie registration to education and training requirements.
7. Multiple year registration for motorcycles similar to a trailer.
8. Mandatory training for motorcycle license/endorsement plus renewal (refresher course).
9. Incentives to train: Upon purchase of a motorcycle, get first year of registration free when signing up for a training course.
10. Impound unregistered motorcycles – find connection to unlicensed riders.
11. Mandatory 30-day impound on second violation.
12. Include driving out-of-class to a misdemeanor.
13. 30-day impound for vehicle being operated by unlicensed or out-of-class driver.
14. Increase point values for motorcycle hazard citations (i.e., commercial vehicles).
15. Require motorcycle endorsement and certificate of completed training course to purchase motorcycle.

16. Require dealers to sell motorcycles only to people with endorsements.
17. Outlaw high speed bikes on roadways.
18. Allow experienced rider course to serve as a license waiver.
19. Court-mandated follow-up for those who are cited for having no license.
20. If person gets points on California driver's license, allow re-training.
21. Propose legislation to expand 22651 California Vehicle Code (CVC) to include out-of-class license for 30-day impounding (incentive for proof of CMSP course).
22. Graduated driver licensing.
  - a. Institute a graduated licensing system tied to behavior.
  - b. Institute a graduated licensing system tied to tiered engine size.
23. Progressive penalties.

## **GROUP B: SPEED, RIGHT-OF-WAY, AND IMPROPER TURNING**

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **Education/Marketing/Outreach**

1. Require viewing of educational videos.
2. Focus on rider violations vs. driver violations.
3. Lane splitting/sharing education.
4. Media campaign to reduce speed and right-of-way misuse.
5. Vehicle driver awareness/create more awareness of motorcycles and applicable laws.
6. Campaign that focuses on good defensive riding.
7. Increase visibility of motorcycles using proper lane placement, proper following distance, and increase conspicuity.
8. Improve rider performance to avoid collisions when right-of-way is violated.

9. Give people a true understanding of vehicle dynamics.
10. Create motorcycle safety traffic schools: automobile drivers that violate motorcyclists' right-of-way should attend motorcycle traffic school and motorcyclists that violate traffic laws should attend motorcycle traffic school.
11. Provide stakeholder groups with data to support whether lane splitting is a problem relative to collisions, or a solution towards reducing congestion and enhanced rider safety.

### **Enforcement**

1. Focused and increased enforcement.
2. Education through enforcement.

### **Regulatory & Statutory**

1. Reduce conflict between automotive and motorcycle DMV exams.

### **Engineering**

1. Make all left-turns at signal-controlled intersections protected.
2. Change all roadway signs to fluorescent green with removal of recommended speeds in turns to an enforceable speed per Section 22350 CVC.
3. Improvement of motorcycle visibility with the use of retro-reflective paint, LED lighting, and oscillating headlights.

### **Other**

1. Manufacturers need to be involved with visibility initiatives as they pertain to motorcycles.
2. Definitive regulations for lane splitting.
3. Misdemeanor/30-day impoundment for speeding in excess of 100 miles per hour.
4. Regulate handle bars and minimize motorcycle rake.
5. Pass legislation that places governors on motorcycles limiting speed and make sale of after-market computer chips illegal.

6. Add sections to DMV driver training and traffic school curriculum, general motor vehicle training.

## **GROUP C: PROMOTING THE USE OF SAFETY EQUIPMENT**

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **Education/Marketing/Outreach**

1. Education/marketing public services announcements.
2. Rebates/turn-in program.
3. Insurance education and outreach.
4. Influence rider culture (protective equipment).
5. Wearing equipment/more voluntary compliance from riders.
6. Educate judges on fatalities and statistics and enforcement efforts.
7. Invite judges to conferences such as the California motorcycle safety summit.
8. Package deal on safety apparel included in the cost of the bike.
9. Educate law enforcement about Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 218 and relevant court cases.
10. Promotion of safety equipment to the baby boomer “cruiser” demographic just entering the motorcycle market.
11. Partnering with manufacturers/dealerships promoting the sale of safety equipment.

#### **Enforcement**

1. Is law enforcement setting the example with what they wear: re-evaluate uniform/apparel.
2. More enforcement of the helmet law (27803 (a) CVC).
3. Use a checklist that identifies if riders are using protective equipment in relation to the CHP 555, Collision Report.

## **Regulatory & Statutory**

1. Revise approved helmet definition.
2. Mandatory eyewear required for motorcyclists.

## **Emergency Medical Services/Psychological**

1. Proper helmet removal training for first responders.

## **Other**

1. Eliminate deductible (insurance) if riding with proper equipment.
2. Update engineering of safety equipment.
3. Insurance companies to develop equipment standards (insurance companies will only cover helmets).
4. Insurance companies and medical communities should support this initiative to help reduce medical costs and insurance premiums (i.e., provide refunds for using protective equipment in case of an accident).
5. Legislation needed for equipment.
6. Revise helmet law.
  - a. Two levels – enforcement and judicial.
  - b. Incorporate the rider is responsible for proof of compliance.
7. Helmets included with new bike purchase (Department of Transportation approved).
8. Possible legislative change with an enforcement result for rider protective gear/equipment.

# **GROUP D: DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE**

## **ACTION ITEMS**

## **Education/Marketing/Outreach**

1. Need to educate military personnel; youth; riding groups and individual riders; physicians; law enforcement; and the general public.



2. Simulator that demonstrates impairment levels.
3. Media campaign.
4. Extend Recording Artists, Actors, and Athletes Against Drunk Driving/ Mothers Against Drunk Driving model to motorcycling/victim impact.
5. "Pre-ride checklist" or "Honda Flight Plan."
6. Change of cultural perceptions that drinking and riding is socially unacceptable.
7. Enhanced participation/partnerships/cooperation with judiciary branch and judges.
8. Use public awareness campaign to help support the reduction of the Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) to .04.
9. Create a culture change making Driving-Under-the-Influence (DUI) offenses culturally unacceptable targeting biker community (i.e., Click It or Ticket).

### **Enforcement**

1. The Scarlet Letter (DUI plate for motorcycle-probable cause for stop).
2. Focused enforcement efforts.
3. Enhanced enforcement training/Drug Recognition Evaluator.
4. Follow-up of repeat offenders.
5. Law enforcement could serve as major enforcer for making DUI offenses culturally unacceptable.

### **Regulatory & Statutory**

1. No pay for damaged motorcycle resulting from DUI.
2. Voluntary interlock installation.
3. 30-day impounds.
4. Enhanced penalties.
5. Enhanced monitoring and penalties by Alcoholic Beverage Control of problem bars.

6. Accountability of bar owners and drinking establishments.
7. Special license plate for previous offenders.

### **Engineering**

1. Install break-away signs.
2. Installation of freeway/highway motorcycle lanes.
3. Speed governors installed on motorcycles (and outlaw micro chips allowing override of governors).

### **Emergency Medical Services/Psychological**

1. Establish partnerships between Emergency Medical Services/law enforcement.
2. Train law enforcement personnel in Phlebotomy.
3. Lower BAC level to .04 (same as commercial).
4. DMV Policy Changes – Test and video education every five years.

**Recommended Course of Action:** In addition to its existing motorcycle safety efforts including the California Motorcyclist Safety Program and co-leading Challenge Area (CA) 12 (Improving Motorcycle Safety) of the state's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), the CHP is prepared to contribute additional resources to develop and implement those action items in the plan which are allowable by state and departmental policy. The CHP also will work in collaboration with partner motorcycle safety stakeholder organizations to address applicable action items and encourage stakeholder organizations to address action items within the scope of their respective functions. The CHP will also oversee and monitor overall progress of the safety plan. To achieve maximum success, the following is expected to occur:

1. The CHP will develop and implement short-term and long-term action items allowable by the State of California and departmental policies and regulations.
2. The CHP will work in partnership with partner motorcycle safety stakeholders to identify, develop, and implement action items which are best achieved through collaborative efforts. This effort will also include concurrent work over the next two years to implement the 12 action items contained in SHSP CA 12, Improving Motorcycle Safety.
3. The CHP will encourage motorcycle safety stakeholder organizations to embrace, develop, and implement action items which fall within the mission and scope of their respective agencies.
4. The CHP, with timely information cooperatively provided by all partner organizations, will produce periodic reports to record the plan's progress. Reports will be distributed to all motorcycle safety plan partners.
5. The CHP, in partnership with OTS and NHTSA, will convene in June 2009 to determine the plan's progress. Dependent upon the level of progress, planning for a subsequent motorcycle safety summit may occur.

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